

REMARKS

Claims 1-2, 4, 6-18, 20, and 22-31 are pending in the present application. By this amendment, claims 1 and 16 are amended. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present claims in view of the following remarks.

Entry of the above amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 (a) in that the above amendment (1) places the claims in condition for allowance; (2) places the claims in better condition for consideration on appeal, if necessary; (3) does not raise any new issues; and (4) does not add new claims without canceling a corresponding number of claims. For the reasons given above, entry of the above amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 is respectfully requested.

I. Formal Matters

Interview Summary Under 37 C.F.R. §1.133

A telephonic interview occurred between the Applicants' attorney, Jodi Hartman, Examiner Knowlin, and Examiner's Supervisor, Ahmad Matar, on September 22, 2005. The interview covered the rejection of independent claims 1 and 16 as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 5,907,324 to Larson et al. (hereinafter "Larson"), in view of United States Patent No. 5,631,904 to Fitser et al. (hereinafter "Fitser"), and further in view of United States Patent No. 6,192,123 to Grunsted et al. (hereinafter "Grunsted"). The Applicants' attorney provided reasoning why the combined teaching of Larson, Fitser, and Grunsted fails to teach, suggest, or describe claims 1 and 16. Supervisor Matar suggested filing a response to the final Office Action including amendments to the claims to clarify how a current participant communication address associated with the participant communication address is located in the participant profile data in order to update the participant communication address with the current participant communication address.

II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-2, 4, 6-18, 20, and 22-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Larson, in view of Fitser, and further in view of Grunsted. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A. Claims 1-2, 4, and 6-15 are allowable.

As amended, claim 1 recites that a method of automatically establishing a conference comprises receiving participant profile data, wherein the participant profile data comprises participant communication addresses and current participant communication addresses associated with the participant communication addresses; allocating a conference bridge port to set up the conference in accordance with the conference logistics; after allocating the conference bridge port to set up the conference, extracting the participant communication address from the conference logistics; determining if the participant profile data includes the participant communication address extracted from the conference logistics; if the participant profile data includes the participant communication address extracted from the conference logistics, then updating the participant communication address extracted from the conference logistics with a current participant communication address from the participant profile data associated with the participant communication address; and initiating a connection to the conference based on the current participant communication address.

Larson does not teach, suggest, or describe a method of automatically establishing a conference as recited by claim 1. On the contrary, Larson describes a method of automatically establishing a conference environment including receiving a name of a persistent conference object, opening the identified persistent conference object and reading all of the relevant conference parameters; locating the participants' telephone numbers; and calling each of the participants via the participants' telephone numbers to connect the participants to the conference.

This is not analogous to the method recited by claim 1 because Larson fails to teach, suggest, or describe after locating the participant's telephone number in the persistent conference object, determining if participant profile data includes a participant's telephone number extracted from the persistent conference object; if the

participant profile data includes the participant's telephone number extracted from the persistent conference object, then updating the participant's telephone number extracted from the persistent conference object with a current participant's telephone number from the participant profile data associated with the participant's telephone number; and initiating a connection to the conference based on the current participant's telephone number. Instead, Larson describes locating the participant's telephone number and calling the participant to the conference, without suggesting after locating a participant's telephone number, updating the participant's telephone number with a current participant's telephone number and initiating a connection to the conference based on the current participant's telephone number.

Larson also describes that whenever a change in one of the conference parameters occurs, a conference manager detects the change and stores the updated information into the persistent conference object. However, this is not analogous to the method of claim 1 because Larson fails to teach, suggest, or describe that once the participants' telephone numbers are located in order to establish a conference, the telephone numbers are updated with current telephone numbers included in participant profile data.

The Office Action acknowledges that Larson does not disclose updating the participant's telephone number with a current participant's telephone number and relies on the teaching of Fitser to allegedly cure the above-identified deficiencies of Larson. However, like Larson, Fitser does not teach, suggest, or describe a method of automatically establishing a conference as recited by claim 1. In contrast, Fitser describes a method for automatically establishing a conference call to a preselected list of participants by receiving a selection of a group identifier which uniquely identifies a record containing a group of participants to a conference call; causing bridge hardware to originate calls to each of the destinations (participants' telephone numbers) specified in the record; and bridging each of the called participants into the conference call with the subscriber.

This is not analogous to the method recited by claim 1 because Fitser fails to teach, suggest, or describe after receiving the selection of the group identifier, determining if participant profile data includes a participant's telephone number extracted

from the record associated with the received group identifier; if the participant profile data includes the participant's telephone number extracted from the record, then updating the participant's telephone number extracted from the record with a current participant's telephone number from the participant profile data associated with the participant's telephone number; and initiating a connection to the conference based on the current participant's telephone number. Instead, Fitser describes causing bridge hardware to originate calls to each of the participants' telephone numbers specified in the record, without suggesting after receiving the selection of the group identifier, updating the participant's telephone number with a current participant's telephone number and initiating a connection to the conference based on the current participant's telephone number.

The Office Action further relies on the teaching of Grunsted to allegedly cure the above-identified deficiencies of the combined teaching of Larson and Fitser. However, like Larson and Fitser, Grunsted does not teach, suggest, or describe a method of automatically establishing a conference as recited by claim 1. On the contrary, Grunsted describes a method for initiating a conference call by establishing a customer account including a customer's default telephone number, customer's billing information, and a phone book that includes the names and telephone numbers of a conference call group; receiving an account number and a password for the customer; and if the customer's login is verified, then providing the customer with the option of making a conference call to a conference call group in the phone book. If the customer selects the option to make a conference call to a conference call group in the phone book, then Grunsted describes receiving a selected conference call group from the customer and initiating a call to the customer via the customer's default telephone number. Once the customer is on the line, Grunsted describes initiating calls to each of the parties in the conference call group via a telephone number provided for each of the parties in the phone book.

This is not analogous to the method recited by claim 1 because Grunsted fails to teach, suggest, or describe after receiving a selected conference call group, determining if participant profile data includes a party's telephone number extracted from the phone book; if the participant profile data includes the party's telephone number extracted from

the phone book, then updating the party's telephone number extracted from the phone book with a current party's telephone number from the participant profile data associated with the party's telephone number; and initiating a connection to the conference based on the current party's telephone number. Instead, Grunsted describes receiving a selected conference call group from the customer and initiating calls to each of the parties in the conference call group via a telephone number provided for each of the parties in the phone book, without suggesting after receiving a selected conference call group, updating the party's telephone number with a current party's telephone number.

Grunsted also describes providing the customer with the options of changing the customer's default telephone number and modifying entries in the phone book if the customer's login is verified. If the customer selects the option to change the customer's default telephone number, then Grunsted describes receiving the new default telephone number and updating the database with the new default telephone number so that next time the customer logs in to the system, the new telephone number will appear as the customer's default number. If the customer selects to modify entries in the phone book, then Grunsted describes receiving the customer's modifications to an entry in the phone book and updating the database with the customer's modifications. This is not analogous to the method recited by claim 1 because Grunsted fails to teach, suggest, or describe that after the selected conference call group is received from the customer, the telephone numbers for the parties in the phone book are updated with current telephone numbers for the parties.

For at least the reasons above, Applicants respectfully submit that the combined teaching of Larson, Fitser, and Grunsted fails to make obvious Applicants' claimed invention as embodied in independent claim 1. Since claims 2, 4, and 6-15 depend from independent claim 1 and recite additional features, Applicants submit that the combined teaching of Larson, Fitser, and Grunsted fails to make obvious Applicants' claimed invention as embodied in claims 2, 4, and 6-15. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

B. Claim 16-18, 20, and 22-31 are allowable.

As amended, claim 16 recites that a method of automatically establishing a conference comprises after allocating the conference bridge port to set up the conference, extracting a participant communication address from the conference logistics; determining if the participant profile data includes the participant communication address extracted from the conference logistics; if the participant profile data includes the participant communication address extracted from the conference logistics, then updating the participant communication address extracted from the conference logistics with a current participant communication address from the participant profile data associated with the participant communication address; and initiating a connection to the conference based on the current participant communication address.

Larson does not teach, suggest, or describe a method of automatically establishing a conference as recited by claim 16. On the contrary, as discussed above, Larson describes a method of automatically establishing a conference environment including receiving a name of a persistent conference object, opening the identified persistent conference object and reading all of the relevant conference parameters; locating the participants' telephone numbers; and calling each of the participants via the participants' telephone number to connect the participants to the conference.

This is not analogous to the method recited by claim 16 because Larson fails to teach, suggest, or describe after locating the participant's telephone number in the persistent conference object, determining if participant profile data includes the participant's telephone number extracted from the persistent conference object; if the participant profile data includes the participant's telephone number extracted from the persistent conference object, then updating the participant's telephone number extracted from the persistent conference object with a current participant's telephone number from the participant profile data associated with the participant's telephone number; and initiating a connection to the conference based on the current participant's telephone number. Instead, Larson describes locating the participant's telephone number and calling the participant via the participant's telephone number to connect the participant to the conference, without suggesting after locating the participant's telephone number,

updating the participant's telephone number with a current participant's telephone number and initiating a connection to the conference based on the current participant's telephone number.

Larson also describes that whenever a change in one of the conference parameters occurs, a conference manager detects the change and stores the updated information into the persistent conference object. However, this is not analogous to the method of claim 16 because Larson fails to teach, suggest, or describe that once the participants' telephone numbers are located in order to establish a conference, the telephone numbers are updated with current telephone numbers included in participant profile data.

The Office Action acknowledges that Larson does not disclose updating the participant's telephone number with a current participant's telephone number and relies on the teaching of Fitser to allegedly cure the above-identified deficiencies of Larson. However, like Larson, Fitser does not teach, suggest, or describe a method of automatically establishing a conference as recited by claim 16. In contrast, Fitser describes a method for automatically establishing a conference call to a preselected list of participants by receiving a selection of a group identifier which uniquely identifies a record containing a group of participants to a conference call; causing bridge hardware to originate calls to each of the destinations (participants' telephone numbers) specified in the record; and bridging each of the called participants into the conference call with the subscriber.

This is not analogous to the method recited by claim 16 because Fitser fails to teach, suggest, or describe after receiving the selection of the group identifier, determining if participant profile data includes a participant's telephone number extracted from the record associated with the received group identifier; if the participant profile data includes the participant's telephone number extracted from the record, then updating the participant's telephone number extracted from the record with a current participant's telephone number from the participant profile data associated with the participant's telephone number; and initiating a connection to the conference based on the current participant's telephone number. Instead, Fitser describes causing bridge hardware to originate calls to each of the participants' telephone numbers specified in the record,

without suggesting after receiving the selection of the group identifier, updating the participant's telephone number with a current participant's telephone number and initiating a connection to the conference based on the current participant's telephone number.

The Office Action further relies on the teaching of Grunsted to allegedly cure the above-identified deficiencies of the combined teaching of Larson and Fitser. However, like Larson and Fitser, Grunsted does not teach, suggest, or describe a method of automatically establishing a conference as recited by claim 16. On the contrary, Grunsted describes a method for initiating a conference call by establishing a customer account including a customer's default telephone number, customer's billing information, and a phone book that includes the names and telephone numbers of a conference call group; receiving an account number and a password for the customer; and if the customer's login is verified, then providing the customer with the option of making a conference call to a conference call group in the phone book. If the customer selects the option to make a conference call to a conference call group in the phone book, then Grunsted describes receiving a selected conference call group from the customer and initiating a call to the customer via the customer's default telephone number. Once the customer is on the line, Grunsted describes initiating calls to each of the parties in the conference call group via a telephone number provided for each of the parties in the phone book.

This is not analogous to the method recited by claim 16 because Grunsted fails to teach, suggest, or describe after receiving a selected conference call group, determining if participant profile data includes a party's telephone number extracted from the phone book; if the participant profile data includes the party's telephone number extracted from the phone book, then updating the party's telephone number extracted from the phone book with a current party's telephone number from the participant profile data associated with the party's telephone number; and initiating a connection to the conference based on the current party's telephone number. Instead, Grunsted describes receiving a selected conference call group from the customer and initiating calls to each of the parties in the conference call group via a telephone number provided for each of the parties in the

phone book, without suggesting after receiving a selected conference call group, updating the party's telephone number with a current party's telephone number.

Grunsted also describes providing the customer with the options of changing the customer's default telephone number and modifying entries in the phone book if the customer's login is verified. If the customer selects the option to change the customer's default telephone number, then Grunsted describes receiving the new default telephone number and updating the database with the new default telephone number so that next time the customer logs in to the system, the new telephone number will appear as the customer's default number. If the customer selects to modify entries in the phone book, then Grunsted describes receiving the customer's modifications to an entry in the phone book and updating the database with the customer's modifications. This is not analogous to the method recited by claim 16 because Grunsted fails to teach, suggest, or describe that after the selected conference call group is received from the customer, the telephone numbers for the parties in the phone book are updated with current telephone numbers for the parties.

For at least the reasons above, Applicants respectfully submit that the combined teaching of Larson, Fitser, and Grunsted fails to make obvious Applicants' claimed invention as embodied in independent claim 16. Since claims 17-18, 20, and 22-31 depend from claim 16 and recite additional features, Applicants submit that the combined teaching of Larson, Fitser, and Grunsted fails to make obvious Applicants' claimed invention as embodied in claims 17-18, 20, and 22-31. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

For at least these reasons, Applicants assert that the pending claims 1-2, 4, 6-18, 20, and 22-31 are in condition for allowance. The Applicants further assert that this response addresses each and every point of the final Office Action, and respectfully request that the Examiner pass this application with claims 1-2, 4, 6-18, 20, and 22-31 to

Appl. No. 10/028,958
Amdt. dated October 4, 2005
Reply to Office Action of July 14, 2005

allowance. Should the Examiner feel that a telephone interview with Applicants' attorney would further advance the case, please contact Applicants' attorney at 404.954.5042.

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Respectfully submitted,

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